

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Paula Garcia, I am a student at Connecticut River Academy and a resident from Hartford Connecticut. **I stand in support of S.B. No. 284: “AN ACT PROVIDING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS,” with clear language that extends eligibility to all HUSKY programs to all CT residents, regardless of immigration status.**

My family is from the Dominican Republic but I was born here in the United States. My mom has been living and working here for over 25 years. When my cousin turned 19 years old, she didn't have health insurance because she didn't qualify for state insurance and her job didn't offer it. She didn't have access to dental care and would have to do her dental cleaning on her own in order to maintain her teeth. When she got into a car accident and had to go to the doctor, she had an extensive bill from the emergency room visit that she struggled to pay for. She was sent to a collections agency and it took her three years to pay her 5000 bill. In addition, I have also had many members who came to visit in my home but couldn't get access to health care because they came here on a visiting visa. They have gotten sick and racked up a huge amount of medical bills that my mom and my family members are currently paying for.

I believe it is important for families to have access to health care so they don't accumulate so much debt and take care of their health. I also think it is unfair that families like mine don't get the basic decency to have healthcare because of their immigration status. To think that children in this state do not have access is shameful!

Please vote in favor of SB284.

Sincerely,
Paula Garcia